

Name(s) _____

Period _____ Due Date ___/___/___

Bridge of Spies

“You don’t seem alarmed.”

~ James Donovan

“Would it help?”

~ Rudolf Abel

Essential Guidelines:

- clearly state the question you are addressing
- you must use the provided Google Doc template for your final submission
- edit carefully and cite plenty of evidence
- submit a digital file following our class guidelines via Canvas

Part One – Literary Connections: Pick *one* of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in 2 ¶s or less. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source. Use examples from the film and/or other related films that would provide supporting evidence.

1. Consider and describe the **mood** and **tone** of this film. Does the mood change? Is there anything unique about the **tone** of this film?
2. Cite at least two concrete examples of **foreshadowing** used in this film. Also consider the use of **motifs** as a form of **foreshadowing**.
3. Cite an example of **irony** in this film (either *situational*, *dramatic* or *verbal*). Identify the example and explain why it’s an effective use of **irony** in the context of this movie.

Part Two – Cinematic Connections: Pick *one* of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in 2 ¶s or less. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source. Use examples from the film and/or other related films that would provide supporting evidence.

4. Recall a scene that impressed you aesthetically. What did you like about it – the editing, camera placement, lighting, etc?
5. Discuss two memorable scenes in terms of **Camera Placement: Distance from Object**. Refer to your vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used by Spielberg in these scenes? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with the director’s shot selection?
6. Discuss two memorable scenes in terms of **Camera Placement: Angle to Object**. Refer to your vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used by Spielberg in these scenes? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with the director’s shot selection?
7. We know that there are essentially **three types of movement** in film: 1) the viewer’s eye searches and scans the screen, 2) characters or objects move in relation to the frame, and 3) the camera moves across, into or away from its own field of vision. Cite a memorable scene from this film for each of these **three types of movement**.

Part Three – Analysis: Pick *one* of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in about 3-to-5 ¶s. Depth of thought and analysis is what counts here, not hot air. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source.

- 8. Much like Hitchcock, in “Bridge of Spies” Spielberg “*captures the arc of a man who is caught up in something bigger than himself and somehow rises to the occasion,*” as critic Brian Tallerico observes. Compare the protagonist in this film – James Donovan (played by Tom Hanks) – to a similar character in either another Spielberg film or Hitchcock film who also gets caught up in something bigger than him/herself. How are the characters similar? What are the key differences?
- 9. Not sure if you noticed this, but there is no score for the first 27 minutes of the film. In fact, the first time that Thomas Newman’s Oscar-nominated score enters the film is when James Donovan is followed by an unknown man while walking in the rain. Donovan realizes in this scene that his work on the Rudolf Abel case is going to be fraught with all kinds of peril the likes of which he has never experienced. Why do you think Spielberg and Newman chose to delay the use of the score until so late in the film? Why is the score so sparse throughout the movie?
- 10. Mark Rylance won an Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his portrayal of Rudolf Abel. As critic Brian Tallerico writes: “*The wonderful actor understands what Abel and Donovan see in each other – they are both men following orders. They are both men who refuse to take the easy way out. And they are both men who can see the bigger picture easier than most, knowing that it is the portrait that subsists, not the real man. It is the image, the record, the interpretation that goes in the history books.*” What did you think of Rylance’s performance? Was it worth of an Academy Award?
- 11. In many ways, this film parallels much of Hitchcock’s work. In fact, Spielberg was a devotee of Alfred Hitchcock and likely borrowed much from Hitch’s work. So, what do you think? Identify at least three ways that “Bridge of Spies” borrows from Alfred Hitchcock’s work – especially any of the films that we’ve watched for class.
- 12. An anonymous viewer posted this observation on a blog site about the film: “*This is not a flag-waving, jingoistic film, but a well-tempered look at the political milieu of the late ‘50s and early ‘60s. Although the film portrays the Russians as brutal, it never panders to the current efforts to demonize them. Spielberg gives as much attention to American narrow-mindedness and hysteria as he does to hard-line Soviet attitudes.*” What do you think? Is this film more balanced politically than many of today’s movies that deal with America’s international conflicts? Or is Spielberg trying to be too politically correct?

Notes:

Release Date.....2015
 DirectorSteven Spielberg
 Screenplay.....Matt Charman, Ethan Coen & Joel Coen

Characters:

Rudolf Abel.....Mark Rylance
 James B. DonovanTom Hanks
 Thomas Watters Jr.Alan Alda
 Mary DonovanAmy Ryan
 Francis Gary Powers.....Austin Stowell